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SUBJECT: Some Turkish Ports May Miss ISPS Deadline

Ref: State 85792

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1. In an April 13 meeting with Econoff, Okay Kilic and Nihat Asan, Department Heads at the Turkish Maritime Undersecretariat, said that Turkish ships should be in compliance with the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS) by July 1, but that some ports may not meet the deadline. IMO members will have the right to turn away ships that have visited ports which do not meet ISPS standards after July 1.

2. Kilic said that vessels were being evaluated by 10 designated "recognized security organizations" (RSOs). About 200 of 670 Turkish ships have completed a security plan and the remainder should comply by July 1. However, the process for Turkish ports is moving more slowly. In part, this is due to the fact that only five RSOs had been designated, although Kilic told us that further RSOs would be selected. Kilic stated that a number of Turkey's privately-run port facilities were apparently resisting this security requirement, primarily due to the cost of completing an assessment. Asan estimated that about 60 percent of Turkey's 124 ports should be in compliance with ISPS by July 1, including the main ports servicing trade with the United States (Izmir, Istanbul, Mersin). However, the others are likely to miss the deadline.

3. Kilic and Asan asked whether there is any possibility of extending the July 1 deadline. Econoff responded that the ISPS requirement set a firm deadline, but that he would report the Maritime Undersecretariat's concerns on this. Kilic and Asan also expressed interest in visiting a U.S. port to learn about American implementation of the ISPS. Embassy will relay this request to the DHS/Coast Guard points of contact listed reftel.
Edelman